

62 March 9. 1813.

An Inaugural Dissertation

#8

on
Apoplexy.

For the Degree
of

Doctor of Medicine.

Submitted to the examination
of the

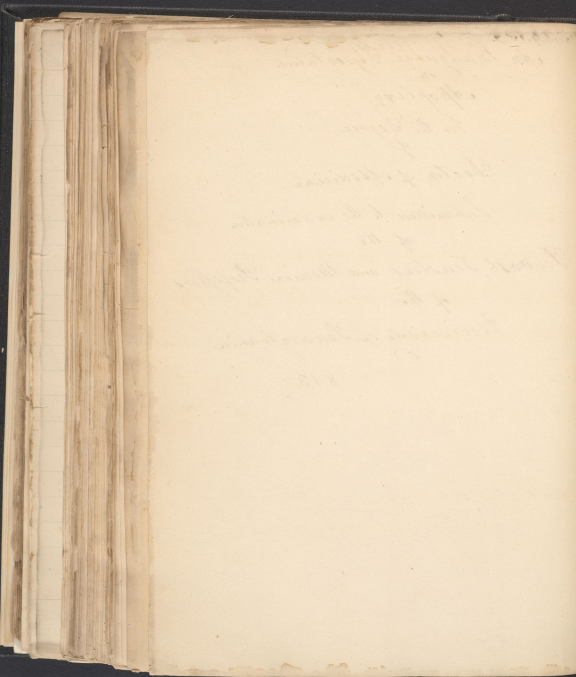
Provost, Trustees, and Medical Professors,
of the

University of Pennsylvania.

1813.

B. Wistar

No 62



Apoplexy.

The following history of Apoplexy, I have drawn up from the Lectures of the Professor of the Institutes. All are of the correctness and utility of his observations on this disease (and on diseases in general) I have taken this history from him, with the view of impressing the subject firmly on my mind, and at the same time to comply with the rules of this University.

Did the laws of the University compel the Candidate to present a Dissertation wholly original, I should indeed be at a loss for a subject, since the present Professors have laboured so much, with a view to the perfection of Medicine.

I am proud to acknowledge the debt I owe to the Professor of the Institutes. That Model of Wisdom, Solomon, it is said, gave the following piece of advice, "Walk in the paths,

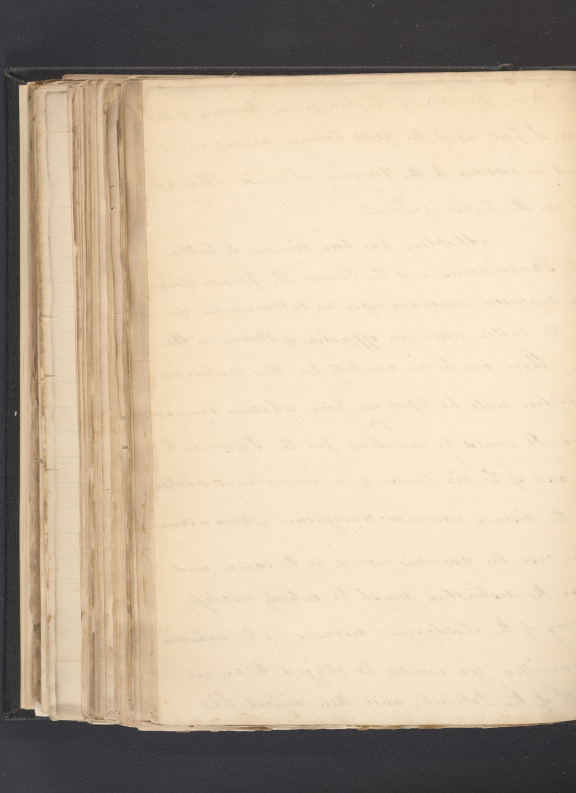
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The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been admitted to the office of the Secretary of the Board of the City of New York, from the year 1771 to the present time. The names are arranged in alphabetical order, and are given in full, with the date of admission, and the name of the person who presented them for admission. The names are given in full, with the date of admission, and the name of the person who presented them for admission. The names are given in full, with the date of admission, and the name of the person who presented them for admission.

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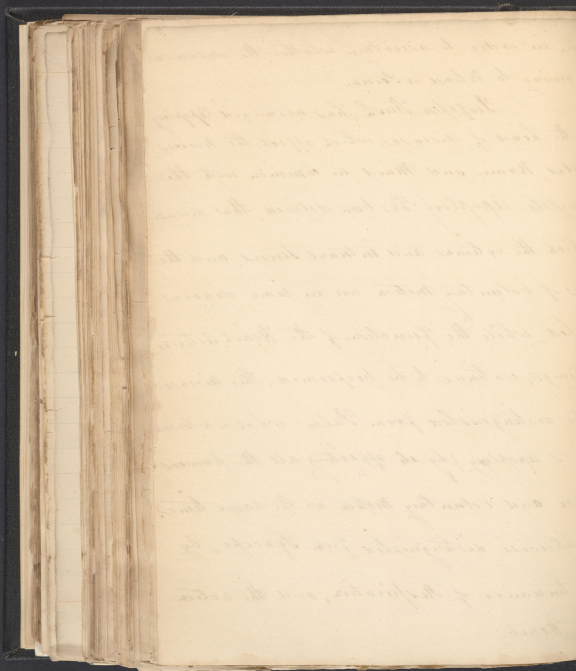
of wise Men² sensible of the beneficial tendency of this
Silence, I feel as if the good Solomon accompanied
me, and in addition to the foregoing; observed, "Stay not
thou from the paths of Rush."

Apoplexy, has been divided by Cullen
into the Languineous, and the Serous. The former species
Cullen supposed, depended upon an extravasation of
Blood, the latter, upon an effusion of Serum in the
brain. There can be no necessity for this distinction,
for Apoplexy will be Apoplexy, from whatever cause
induced. It would be impossible for the Physician to
know, and if he did know, of no importance, whether
whether the disease arose in consequence of Blood or Serum.
In either case, the remedies would be the same, and
therefore the distinction must be entirely useless.
Like many of the Nosological diseases, (if this distinction
was admitted) we would be obliged to await
the death of the Patient, and then dissect his



Brain, in order to ascertain whether the disease was owing to Blood or Serum.

Professor Rush has arranged Apoplexy under the head of, diseases which affect the Nerves, Muscles, Brain, and Mind, in common with the Blood vessels. Apoplexy has been defined, that disease in which the external and internal Senses, and the powers of voluntary Motion, are in some degree abolished, while the Functions of the Heart, Arteries and Lungs, continue to be performed. This disease may be distinguished from Palsy (which is a lower grade of Apoplexy) by its affecting all the powers of Sense and voluntary Motion, at the same time. It is likewise distinguished from Syncope, by the continuance of Respiration, and the action of the Heart.



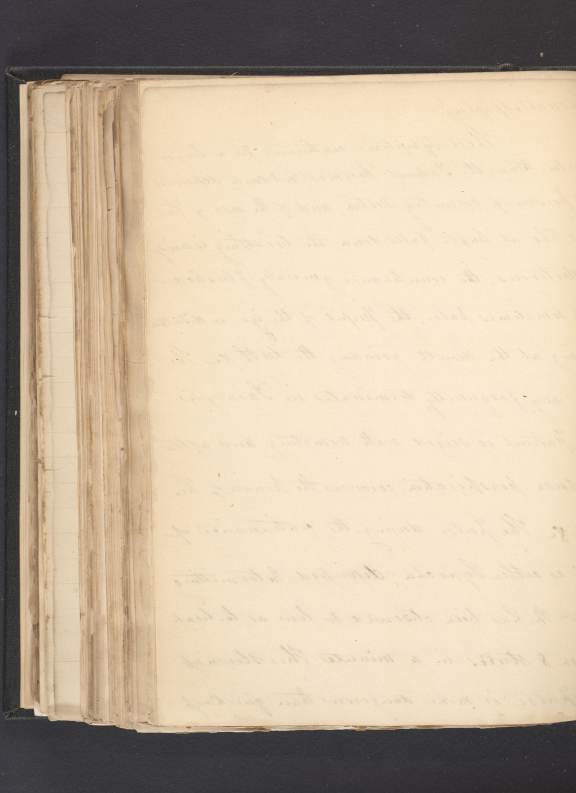
The Sleep of Apoplexy, is known from common Sleep, by its coming on more suddenly, being more profound, and more generally attended with moving. There is usually a relaxation of the Sphincters of the Anus, and Bladder, whilst the peristaltic motion of the Bladder continues.

The Patient is sometimes attacked suddenly, but most frequently, the Fit is preceded by some of the following symptoms, *viz.* Elevated excitement, Shivering, in Persons, unaccustomed to it. Drowsiness, Giddiness. Numbness in one or both arms, or sides. Dull and false vision, Cloudiness over the eyes.

Absence of Piles or Gout, in Persons affected with them. The face becoming suddenly flushed, the blood is suffused over the whole face, of a dark red colour, This last symptom, constitutes the disease to which Doct. Rush has given the name

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of Facial Apoplexy.

These symptoms continuing for a longer or shorter time, the Patient becomes suddenly deprived of the powers of voluntary Motion, and of the use of his Senses. He at length falls down, the breathing is noisy and stertorous, the countenance generally flushed, though sometimes pale, the pupil of the eye is dilated, foaming at the mouth, grinding the teeth &c. The disease very frequently terminates in Paralysis, or the Patient is seized with vomiting, and after a profuse perspiration, recovers the powers of his Mind &c. The pulse during the continuance of the Fit is either Symploc, depressed, Intermittent or Slow. It has been observed so low as to beat but 7 or 8 strokes in a minute. This slowness of the Pulse is more dangerous than quickness.



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Apoplexy sometimes occurs without shewing
any premonitory symptoms, and when it does it very
generally proves fatal, in consequence of a rupture
of a bloodvessel in the Brain.

The Remote Causes of Apoplexy,
are, excessive exercise of the Understanding. Intemperance
in eating and drinking. Insolation, or what is usually
termed, a Stroke of the Sun. Apoplexy from the last
mentioned cause, is unknown in climates which
are uniformly warm; at least it does not occur
in the natives of such countries.

The exciting causes of Apoplexy,
are very numerous, among which are the following.
Violent exercise of the whole body. Loud speaking.
The impure air of crowded Houses, as Churches, Theatres
&c. Tight ligatures about the neck, in the form
of Cravats. Intoxication. Stoppage of periodical

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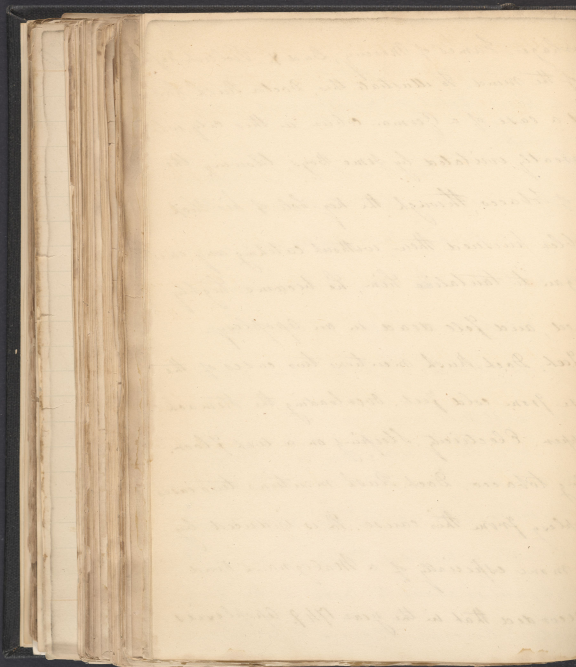
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them on haze. Dumes of Mercury, Lead &c. Violent passions of the mind. To illustrate this, Doctor Rush, has related a case of a German cobbler, in this city, who was greatly irritated by some Boys, blowing the smoke of tobacco, through the key-hole of his shop. The cobbler pursued them, without catching any one, they began to tantalize him, he became highly enraged, and fell dead in an Apoplexy.

Cold Feet. Doct. Rush, mentions two cases of the disease from cold feet. Overloading the Stomach at supper. Electricity. Sleeping on a wet floor. Smoking tobacco. Doct. Rush mentions two cases of Apoplexy from this cause. It is induced by fevers, more especially of a Malignant kind.

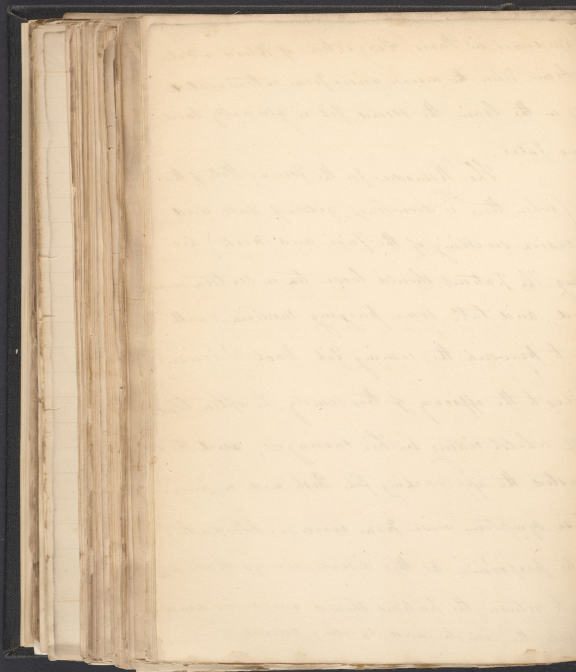
It is recorded that in the year 1749. Apoplexies



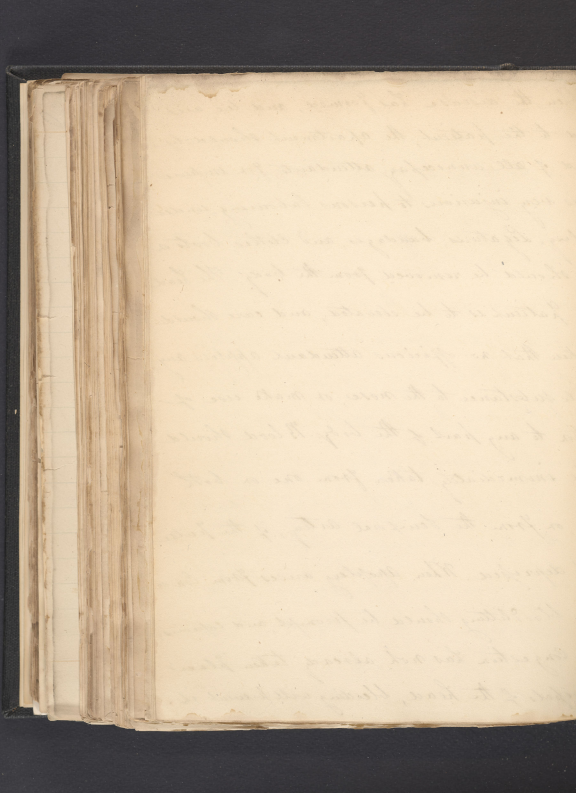
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were Epidemic in Paris. Congestion, of Blood or Water
in the Brain. When the disease arises from extravasated
fluids in the brain, the second fit is generally said
to prove fatal.

The Remedies for the forming state of the
disease (when there is drowsiness, giddiness, dull and
false vision swelling of the face and neck) are,
Bleeding. The Patient should loose ten or sixteen ounces
of blood, and take some purging medicine, with
a view to prevent the coming fit. Doct Darwin
subscribes to the efficacy of this remedy, He often bled
himself whilst riding in his carriage, and there-
by arrested the approaching fit. Rest and a purge
when these symptoms arise from exercise, bloodletting
should be preferred. As this disease always shows a
tendency to return, the Patient should avoid, as much
as possible the remote and exciting cause.

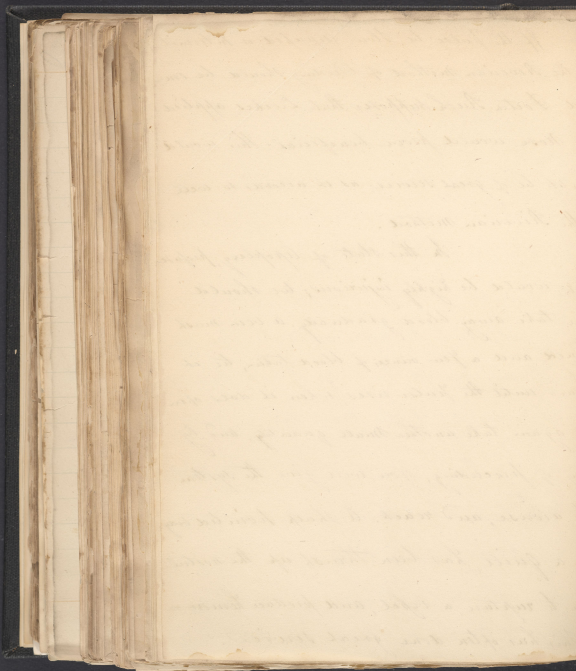


When the disease has formed, and he is
called to the patient, the apartment should be
relieved of all unnecessary attendants, for impure
air is very injurious to persons labouring under
Apoplexy. Ligatures, bandages, and clothes, boots or
shoes should be removed from the body. The head
of the patient is to be elevated, and care should
be taken that no officious attendant applies any
volatile substance to the nose, or make use of
friction to any part of the body. Blood should
then be immediately taken from one or both
temples, or from the Temporal Artery, if the pulse
be not depressed. When Apoplexy arises from Con-
gestion bloodletting should be prompt, and copious;
for if Congestion has not already taken place
in the vessels of the head, bleeding will prevent it.



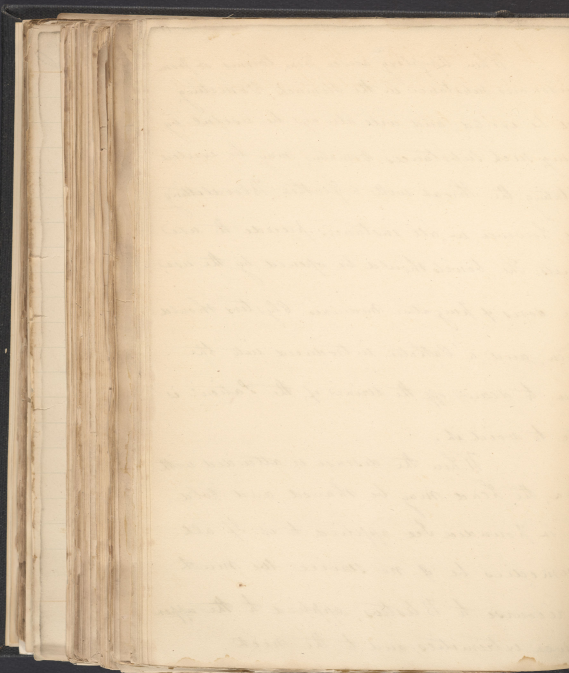
If the Pulse be Slow, Asynched, or Intermitt-
ting, the Riverian Method of bleeding should be em-
ployed. Doctor Rush supposes, that Leeches, applied
up the Nose would prove beneficial. This would
no doubt be of great service, as it accords so well
with the Riverian Method.

In this State of Apoplexy, profuse
bleeding, would be highly injurious; we should
therefore take away blood gradually. A vein must
be opened and a few ounces of blood taken, the it
up - wait until the Pulse rises, when it does, open
the vein again, take another small quantity, and by
this way of proceeding, you will give the system
time to arouse, and react. A sharp pointed body
such as a Quill, has been thrust up the nostril
in order to rupture a vessel, and produce hemor-
rhage. This has often done great service.



When Apoplexy arises from looms, or from
any poisonous substance in the Stomach, Vomiting
should be excited, and will always be useful by
removing such substances. Vomiting may be excited
by irritating the throat with a Feather. Bloodletting
should, however, in all instances precede the use
of Vomits. The bowels should be opened by the use
of large doses of Purgative Medicines. Clysters should
be given, and a Catheter introduced into the
Bladder, to draw off the Urine, if the Patient is
unable to void it.

When the disease is attended with
Plethora, the Head may be shaved, and cold
water, or pounded Ice, applied to it. If all
these remedies be of no service, we must
have recourse to Blisters, applied to the upper
and lower extremities, and to the neck.



In this low state of the disease, Mustard in the form of Cataplasm, should be applied to the Soles of the Feet. Electricity, Friction, to the extremities. Loud and acute sounds, and lastly, the application of the Actual Cautery, to the Neck. If these different remedies, should fail to restore the Patient, we will at least console ourselves with the certainty, that no exertion on our part, has been wanting.

The Unfavourable signs of this disease, are, when it attacks persons under thirty years of age. Doctor Rush mentions but one case which he cured, under this age. It is mostly fatal when it occurs in children. When the Patient makes an effort to reach his mouth with his hand. When a Fever appears late in the disease, When the Pulse is Intermittent, and when the

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Face is pale. It is almost always fatal, when it comes on, without any of the premonitory signs.

The favourable symptoms of Apoplexy, are: Sweat, Vomiting, a quick Pulse, general perspiration, Palsy on one side &c. A greater number of Persons, recover from Apoplexy brought on by intoxication, than from any other cause.

The Prophylactics, are avoiding indigestible Food of all kinds, such as Mince pies, Duck Pudding is of opinion that the great number of Apoplexies, which occur about Christmas, may be attributed to the general use of Mince pies about that period. Temperance in eating and drinking. Changes in the Diet, should be avoided. Moderately stimulating drinks, to Persons, who have been in the habit of drinking spirituous liquors.

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Madecira Wine, with water, should be preferred to other drinks. For the purpose of removing Giddiness Garlic has been used with advantage. Doct Rush in his lecture on this subject, mentions the case of a person, who was troubled with giddiness, having dreamed a certain Parson directed him to take two or three cloves of Garlic a day. He awoke made use of this remedy, and was perfectly cured. Exercise, this should be gentle and constant, either walking or riding, the latter mode is preferable; Fatigue from either mode is to be carefully avoided. The Patient should not sleep with his head low, or on his back, or too much on one side, for this purpose the Patient should lie on a hard bed, a Mattress is very good as it will induce him to be restless.

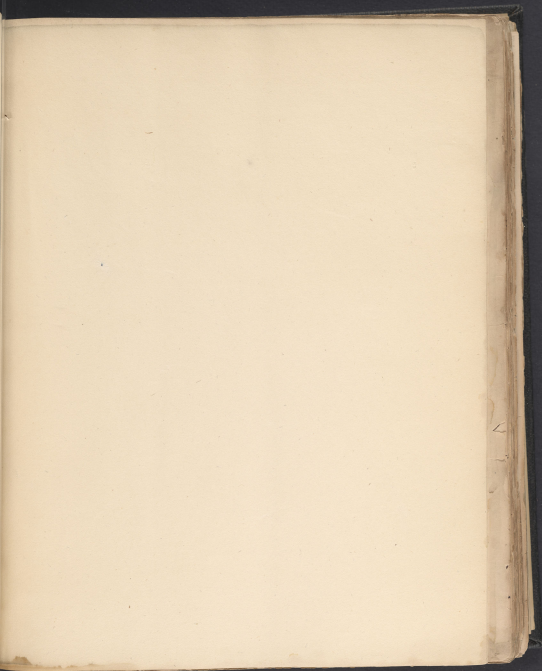
If the suppression of a discharge from an old sore, has taken place, Issues may very properly be employed, likewise seatons in the back of the neck. Avoiding crowded assemblies, and particularly guarding the feet against cold, for this purpose thick stockings, should be worn, Plasters of Burgundy Pitch, or what Doctor Rush particularly recommends, a Plaster of Shoemaker's Wax, worn between the foot and the stocking.

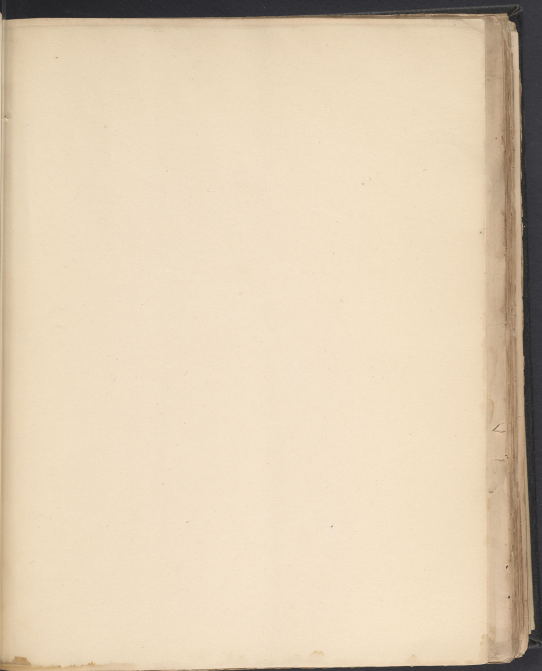
Castneap must be guarded against, any Mitral Conicut Surge, may frequently be exhibited.

Having brought the subject of Apoplexy, to a conclusion, it only remains, for me, to tender my warmest thanks to the Professors, in this University, for their polite attention to me. It is my sincerest wish, that they may live to instruct Thousands, who shall feel as grateful, to them as the author of this Essay.

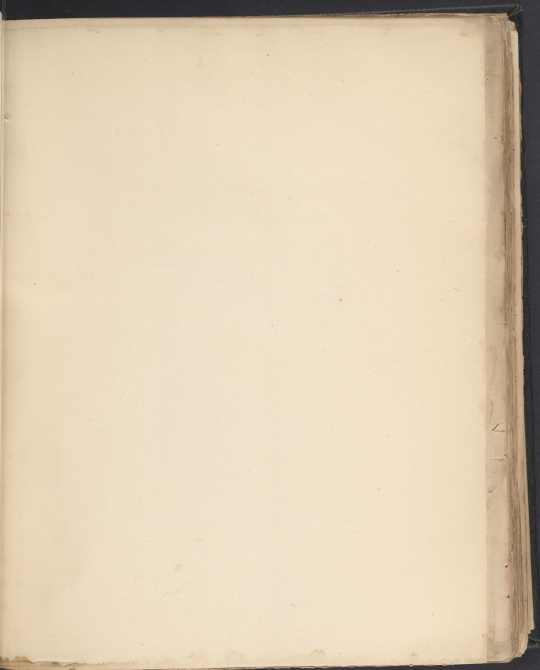
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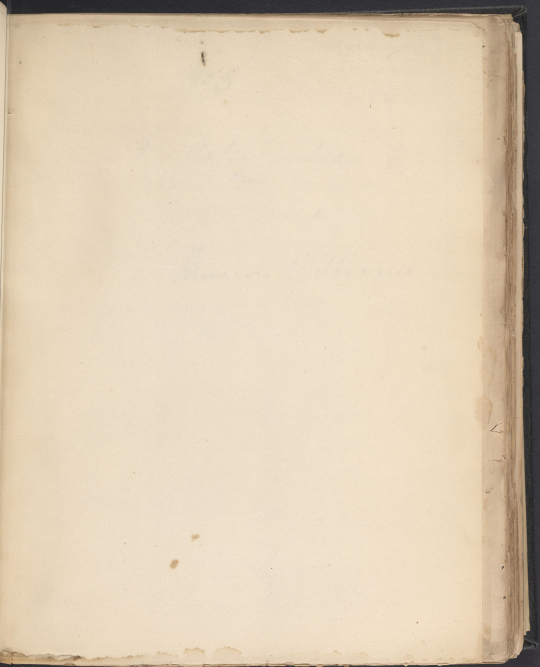












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